

THE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF TYLER JUNIOR COLLEGE

# APACHE

FALL 2017





## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



TJC President Dr. Mike Metke and his wife Donna, flanked by Apache Belles Madison Jantzen (far left) and Katie Park, at TJC's 1920s-themed 90th Anniversary Celebration to benefit the TJC Promise, held in May. For more on the celebration, see Page 16.

When Donna and I came here in 2007, we were amazed by the rich history of Tyler Junior College and by the stories shared with us by so many TJC alumni, staff and friends.

Hearing the passion from people whose personal history was so tied to the College and how much it meant to them, I remember worrying at the time that all we were going to be celebrating was a storied past.

It became immediately important to me that we not only had the proud past but also a promising future.

Considering what we've accomplished together over the past 10 years – with our emphasis on meeting the workforce needs of the community, strengthening our Presidential Honors Program,

and creating a college-going culture and changing the world with the new TJC Promise – it's clear that our best days aren't behind us.

I'm reminded of Shakespeare's "The Tempest," when Antonio said, "What's past is prologue," which means what you have just seen sets the stage for what is to come.

If the last decade is any indication, I can say with absolute certainty that we are in a new golden era at TJC and the best is yet to be.

*L. Michael Metke*

Dr. L. Michael Metke  
President, Tyler Junior College



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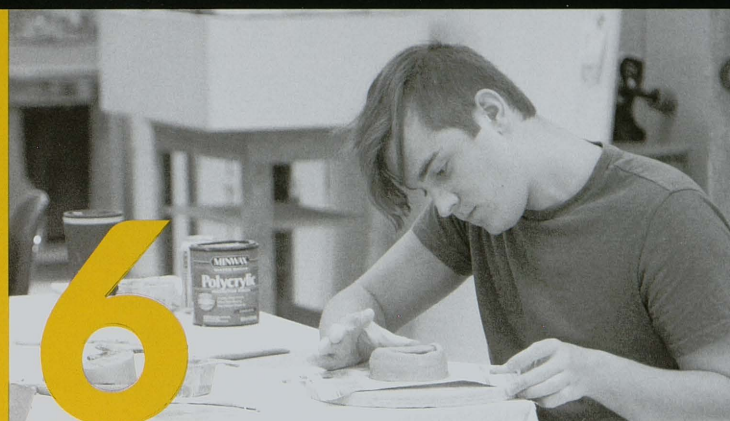
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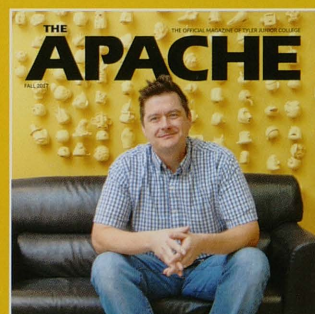


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### ON THE COVER

David Funk, TJC Presidential Honors  
Program director and art professor,  
photographed by Jessica Alexander



## DID YOU KNOW?

TJC is the only community college  
in Texas to offer a Bachelor of  
Science degree.



# Unlimited Opportunities

*TJC Presidential Honors Program helps top students reach even higher*

By Tracy Torma

Lucas Sartain was drawn to the medical field as a child. Today, the Van High School graduate is taking pre-nursing courses as one of 300 students participating in the TJC Presidential Honors Program.

"I want to be in a position to help people and make a difference. I want to help change the perception among kids that doctors' offices are always so scary," said Sartain, whose ultimate goal is to become a master nurse practitioner.

The TJC Presidential Honors Program is designed for high-achieving students like Sartain. The small and focused academic program features specialized coursework, dedicated faculty, individual advising and planning, and reserved on-campus housing.

"The program offers a different kind of learning experience for students," said Program Director and Professor David Funk.

"Honors program students benefit from smaller class sizes (15 students or less) and dedicated program professors. Coursework involves higher thinking, research, introspection and discussion."

For Tyler resident Chris Williams, the TJC Presidential Honors Program offered an opportunity for an affordable, quality education close to home.

"I love the small feel of the campus with all the big university possibilities," said Williams, a pre-med major. "The teachers are exceptional. They challenge you to go further than just understanding subject content. You have to look outside the classroom for answers instead of looking inside a book."





# Advantages of the Presidential Honors Program

- Small class sizes
- Personal advising
- Honors study lounge with computers, free printing and coffee bar
- Dedicated Honors Living and Learning Community in TJC residence hall
- Unique opportunities on campus

## To Qualify for the Presidential Honors Program

Guidelines for high school graduating students:

- Rank in the top 25% at the end of their junior year
- Achieve a 3.5 high school GPA (unweighted) AND meet one of the following testing requirements:
- ACT - Composite score of 26 or higher with a minimum of 19 on each the English and Math sub-tests
- Old SAT - Combined score of 1200 on the Math and Critical Reading sub-tests, with a minimum of 500 on each.
- New SAT - Minimum score of 650 in evidence-based reading and writing and minimum score of 620 in math.

For more information, go to [tjc.edu/honors](http://tjc.edu/honors).



TJC honors students Heidi Soto (left) and Lucas Sartain with David Funk, TJC honors program director and professor.

Heidi Soto, a dental hygiene student, heard about the honors program through a high school classmate. She considered two other universities, but liked the TJC campus and its location closer to her hometown of Longview.

"Our classes are small, and we are assigned to read and discuss topics with our classmates and professors. I really like that learning environment," said Soto, who is a member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society and works as a student assistant in the Student Life Office, helping organize on-campus events.

"There is a community within the honors student program and we have a greater sense of belonging on campus. The student life is very vibrant."

Students who live in the TJC service area and graduate in either the top 10 or the top 10 percent of their high school class are automatically eligible for the Presidential Honors Scholarship, which guarantees automatic admission into the program.

Students who have been awarded the Presidential Honors Scholarship receive an additional \$1,000 per year to live on

campus in the Honors Living and Learning Community (LLC) housed inside the Ornelas Residential Complex. The LLC offers devoted study lounges as well as unique opportunities, such as field trips, guest speakers, social gatherings and service opportunities. Students can also earn discounted living costs for every "A" they receive.

For Sartain, the decision to attend TJC as part of the Presidential Honors Program was a no-brainer.

"When you start out at TJC in the honors program, you have the opportunity to get the same, if not better, education than you would at a larger school," he said. "Having those two years paid for gives you the opportunity to go further, getting a master's degree for the price of a bachelor's, or having the option to pursue a doctorate degree."

His advice to potential college students: "If you're unsure about what you're going to study, TJC is a perfect place. They offer so many certifications and degrees. And the guidance of the honors faculty is more than enough to help you reach your full potential."





*"Working with art students to create something, and helping them see within themselves something they didn't know they had, hooked me on the teaching profession."*

**David Funk**



# Molding Students for Success

By Tracy Torma

While David Funk is a potter by avocation, today he is helping mold students to reach their full potential.

As administrator of TJC's Presidential Honors Program, Funk coordinates the activities of 300 freshmen and sophomores who are part of a program for high-achieving students. (See related story, Page 4.)

"This is a different learning environment for students who are goal-oriented and purpose-driven," he says. "Our faculty tasks the students academically in a different, challenging way."

Funk grew up in Southern Illinois, the son and grandson of farmers. But he was drawn to the arts. He received his associate's degree in graphics, a

bachelor's degree in studio art from Southern Illinois University, and a master's in fine arts from Utah State University.

"I never thought about being a teacher until I became a teaching assistant for a class while a graduate student," he says. "Working with art students to create something, and helping them see within themselves something they didn't know they had, hooked me on the teaching profession."

Funk began teaching art at TJC after moving to Tyler in 2009. Two years ago, he moved out of his full-time teaching role to coordinate the TJC Presidential Honors Program.

"I agreed to take the job only if I could keep teaching," says Funk, who continues teaching pottery as an adjunct professor.

"Art will always be my compass, even as today I'm learning more about programmatic goals, assessment and administrative activities as I direct the Presidential Honors Program. I still like to play in the mud and build things."

Whether he's teaching classes on clay or ceramics or working with honors students, Funk enjoys connecting with people.

"Working with our honors students is the best part of this job. They are amazing," he said. "I tell them the best thing I can do for them is get out of the way."

## PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

"After my son, Noah, graduated from Whitehouse High School in the top 7 percent of his class, he received admission and scholarship offers from major universities, including the University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&M, Baylor and TCU. However, he didn't feel ready to leave home just yet and TJC was a very natural option for him. As an educator for 26 years, I was familiar with TJC because I worked extensively with the dual credit and admissions offices as director of college advising at All Saints Episcopal School and now as an independent educational consultant. It's an affordable and sound educational option. Noah has benefitted from the individual attention given to students and the caliber of the teachers in the Presidential Honors Program. The program offers students many opportunities. Last semester, my son traveled to Spain with Dr. Mike Metke and the alumni association. He's also had opportunities for internships and community service. I always knew TJC was a great institution. It wasn't until I became a parent of a TJC student that I realized how really great it is."

**Trang Vuong**

Independent Educational Consultant  
Tyler, TX





# Metke reflects on 10<sup>years</sup> at TJC

By Elise Mulinix



Asked about his first impression of Tyler Junior College when he stepped on campus as president in 2007, and Dr. Mike Metke's eyes twinkle and a smile crosses his face.

"My wife Donna and I still remark about how unprepared we were for what a wonderful, special place TJC is," Metke said. "There's a good will here and a reservoir of positive feelings unlike anywhere we had ever been before."

"Part of it is, anywhere you go in the community, pretty much everyone in the room has some attachment to TJC: They've attended classes here, they discovered who they were and who they could become. They met their spouses and their friends for life, and it put them in a position to be successful."

Metke is celebrating his 10th year as president of what he terms as The College of East Texas.

And while he is known for always pressing forward – whether it involves climbing the nearest available mountain or persuading state legislators that TJC should be the first two-year college in Texas to offer a Bachelor of Science degree – with a milestone anniversary comes a certain amount of looking back on where he's been.

The past decade under the Metke regime has been a busy one, as the TJC Board of Trustees and his employees can attest.

"I hear people use the term 'change agent.' I had never known a change agent until I met Mike Metke," said TJC trustee David Hudson, who was board president when Metke was hired in 2007.

Metke sees many highlights among his lengthy list of projects.

## **Rogers Nursing & Health Sciences Center**

Following Metke's initial, massive overhaul of TJC's infrastructure, a strategic plan was created for TJC's nursing and health sciences programs and filling the ever-increasing workforce needs of the area's vibrant health care industry.

The Robert M. Rogers Nursing & Health Sciences Center opened its doors in early 2015.

At approximately 150,000 square feet, the Rogers building allowed for the expansion of the associate degree nursing and dental hygiene programs. Plus, it created space for new programs, including: occupational therapy assistant, wellness and exercise specialist, physical therapist assistant, dental assisting, community health worker and polysomnography.

## **TJC Presidential Honors Program**

The TJC Presidential Honors Program is an elite community designed for the high-achieving student. It's a small and focused academic program with specialized coursework, dedicated honors faculty, individual advising and reserved housing.

"These are the overachievers, and having 300 of those top students in honors has had a huge impact."



### Protecting 'our competitive advantage': the TJC employees

"I have long maintained that our employees are our greatest asset," Metke said. "They are our single most important competitive advantage; and when you're out in the community, people talk about the teacher or the advisor or the person who touched their lives."

During the Great Recession, he said, there were TJC employees who needed to retire, but the safety net (Social Security eligibility for state employees) that was removed in the 1970s hampered their ability to retire comfortably.

In addition to TRS, the state retirement plan, TJC employees are now also part of a supplemental plan that Metke said, "helps restore that safety net and helps us attract and retain great employees. I'm glad we were able to take care of our dedicated employees."

### Legislative matters

Metke also found the relationship between state legislators and community colleges to be lacking, and he set about making improvements.

"We realized we hadn't responded to changes in the legislature in terms of our (Texas Association of Community Colleges) personnel," he said. "We brought in a new team, and the legislators responded positively."

With the transformation to a more conservative, Republican Texas legislature, community colleges are a natural fit, he said.

"Community colleges respond quickly. We're cost effective. We have local participation. The state provides less than 20 percent of our operations costs, and look what they get in return," he said.

"We were able to explain the importance of a statewide network of community colleges, and I think they saw the value of maintaining a healthy, strong community college system for the state."



From left: TJC President Dr. Mike Metke; Grand Saline High School freshman and TJC Promise student Grant Lewis; and Grant's father, Micah Lewis, Grand Saline ISD Superintendent.

### TJC's first baccalaureate program

Metke said the improved relationship with state legislators helped TJC get its first baccalaureate degree, a Bachelor of Science in dental hygiene.

He sees the possibility for more bachelor's degrees being offered at TJC as the skills demands increase in those fields.

TJC is working on its second baccalaureate degree, a Bachelor of Applied Technology in healthcare technologies and medical systems, set for the fall 2018 semester.

### The TJC Promise

Recognizing the need to build a college-going culture that will strengthen the East Texas workforce of the future, TJC announced its most ambitious initiative during its 90th anniversary year: The TJC Promise. (See related article on Page 16.)

### The community's college

"When I got here in 2007, we were focused on being a junior college only," he said, "but you can be a great junior college that is a comprehensive community college as well."

"We've transformed from that pure junior college to where more than half of our students are in career and technical programs, workforce programs."

Metke said that change was a gradual one.

The new baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene was a direct response to those workforce efforts, he said.

"Mike Metke has made TJC a better place by working with dedication and diligence to ensure the future of the school and the success of the students," said Ann W. Brookshire, TJC board president.

### A new golden era

When he first arrived in 2007, Metke said he was inundated with alumni, employees and friends of the College sharing their stories about TJC and what it has meant to them over the years.

"Hearing how TJC impacted their lives and how much they treasure this college affected me," he said. "It was like being entrusted with the keys to a Rolls Royce. I wanted to make sure TJC's glory years weren't only in the rear-view mirror but also ahead of us."

"Considering all we've accomplished together over the past 10 years, those things have all aligned and clearly we are in a new golden era at TJC."



# LEGENDARY

By Elise Mullinix

During its 90th anniversary year, Tyler Junior College created the Legends of TJC, a new program honoring its most notable living alumni.

"We have such a rich history of tradition," TJC President Dr. Mike Metke said.

"What better way to celebrate our 90th anniversary than by creating a new tradition recognizing our successful alumni?"

"TJC provides a great foundation for our graduates to be successful in whatever field they choose, and we were proud to salute Admiral Bobby R. Inman as our first honoree."

During a special day of events, the main lecture classroom in Jenkins Hall – TJC's oldest and most iconic building – was named in Inman's honor.

Legends of TJC honorees to be recognized in the coming months include NBA standout Jimmy Butler, Oscar-winning lyricist Will Jennings and Grammy-winning singer/songwriter Chris Tomlin.

## **From TJC to an exemplary military career**

Admiral Bobby R. Inman was among the first group of students who rode a school bus from Mineola to attend classes at TJC.

As a student at TJC, he was inducted into the Alpha Omicron Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa honor society on April 19, 1947, at age 16. TJC's Alpha Omicron chapter was chartered in November 1930 and is the 10th oldest continuously active chapter in Phi Theta Kappa. Inman was named a Phi Theta Kappa International Distinguished Alumnus at the 1984 National Convention.

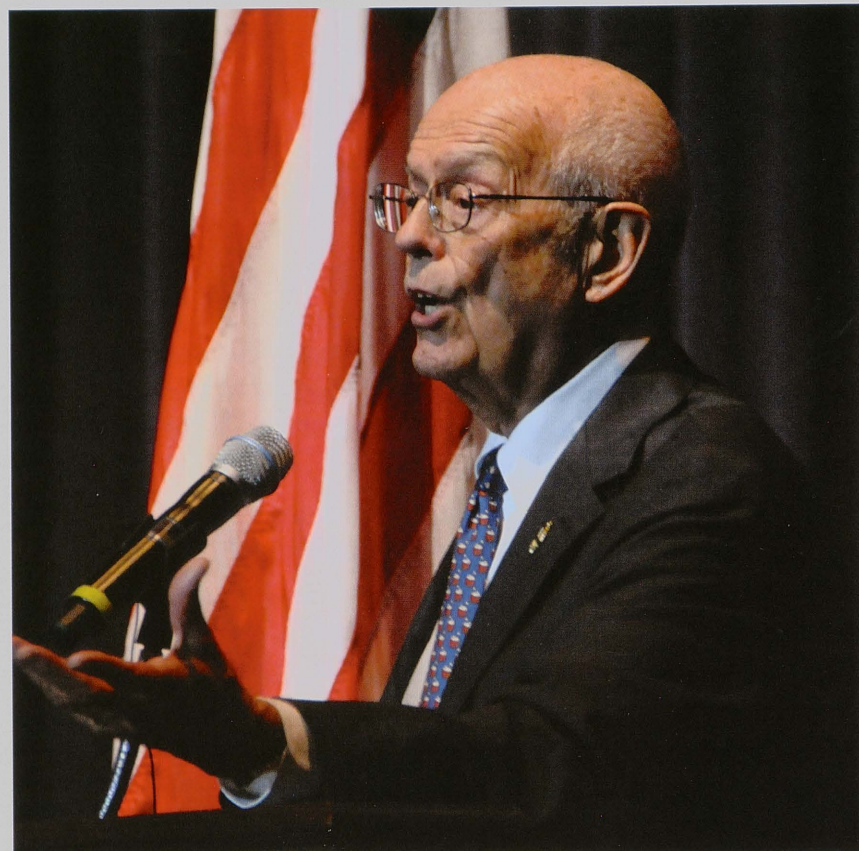
After graduating from TJC in 1948, he transferred to UT Austin and graduated in 1950, then joined the U.S. Navy. He attended the National War College in 1972.

In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford appointed him as the youngest three-star admiral in peacetime history to be vice director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. Later, President Jimmy Carter appointed him director of the National Security Agency.

His final assignment as a naval officer came from President Ronald Reagan, who named him deputy director of Central Intelligence. He retired from the Navy and began his civilian career in July 1982.

In 1984, he was asked by Secretary of State George Shultz to chair a committee on security threats to U.S. embassies around the world. Inman agreed, as the assignment would be non-partisan and the committee's recommendations were used to create embassies built to their specifications.

He is a trustee of the American Assembly and the California Institute of Technology. He is an elected fellow of the National



Admiral Bobby R. Inman

Academy of Public Administration.

Inman currently serves as the Lyndon B. Johnson Centennial Chair in National Policy in the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin.





# Inman, Tomlin named first 'Legends of TJC' honorees



Chris Tomlin

## Tomlin to be named next TJC 'Legend' on Oct. 26

Grammy-winning recording artist and TJC alumnus Chris Tomlin will be the second Legends of TJC recipient.

He will be honored in a special ceremony at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 26, in Jean Browne Theatre on the TJC main campus. Tomlin described his TJC experience in a newspaper column a few years ago:

"My scholarship counselor at TJC, Mary Beal, was such an influence on me. She was assigned to me and that was probably a scary job because I was coming into her

office about every week with a new idea for what I wanted to become.

I thought at one time I would be a physical therapist; I thought I might be a counselor; I thought I might be a doctor. When I first came to TJC, in fact, I started out in the medical career path.

But some amazing things happened to me during those two years at TJC. I met some incredible people who really took the time to listen to me, to be patient with my indecisive nature and to encourage me.

I remember a speech class with Jacque

Shackelford my first year. I'd never had a speech class like that and it was very interesting and it encouraged me to hone my communication skills.

So, Jacque and M'Liss Hindman, another speech and theatre teacher, encouraged me to join the forensics team, and I did. We traveled across the country, performing in forensics meets with bigger schools and with students from all over the U.S. It was a great experience for me and I think I improved with every trip. We won several awards and we just had a blast being together.

It was during that time that I really think I started to form my identity. I went to California for the first time and it was a little unbelievable, this country boy from Grand Saline, Texas – a couple thousand people and a salt mine – and I'm competing in this meet in California."

Tomlin went on to earn his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University in 1994.

In 2005, he won his first Dove Award for excellence in Christian music when his Arriving album was named Praise and Worship Album of the Year.

In 2006, he won five Dove awards, including Male Vocalist of the Year, Song of the Year and Album of the Year. He also received the TJC Alumni Association's Valuable Young Alumnus Award in 2006.

In 2007, he was again named Male Vocalist of the Year in addition to awards for Artist of the Year, Pop/Contemporary Album of the Year and Worship Song of the Year. In all, Tomlin and his band have won 16 Dove awards.

Tomlin and his band moved from Austin to Atlanta in 2008, to start a new church with Passion Conferences speaker Louie Giglio.

In 2012, he won a Grammy award for Best Contemporary Christian Album for his recording, "And If Our God Is For Us."

Tomlin maintains an active touring and recording schedule. His parents, Connie and Donna Tomlin, still reside in his hometown of Grand Saline.





# There's no place like home

## TJC alumni who learned, trained and stayed in East Texas

By Elise Mullinix

After they cross the stage and pick up their diplomas, college graduates often leave town for parts unknown, only to return for homecoming weekends and reunions.

However, many Tyler Junior College alumni say they found their life's work here while they were students. They trained and held internships at area businesses or in the growing medical industry, and then they decided to stay and become active contributors to the community and a boon to the local economy.

***"Our students are our best investment," TJC President Dr. Mike Metke said. "We take a lot of pride in making sure college is affordable and accessible for all of our students."***

***"To have them stay after they graduate and contribute locally is really the best possible outcome, plus it's part of our mission as the community's college."***

**Rocky Coss,**

### TJC Class of 2010

After quitting high school his junior year, Rocky Coss later earned his GED and got a job as an in-home appliance technician for Sears.

"It was good work, but I wanted to do more for my family and knew I needed more training for that," Coss said.

He and his wife Jennifer live in Van with their three teenage daughters.

Coss started taking classes on the TJC West Campus in 2008. In 2010, he earned certificates of proficiency in heating, air conditioning and refrigeration and commercial refrigeration.



After he was chosen to receive a scholarship from the TJC Foundation Scholarship Golf Tournament, Coss was able to continue his education and received an

Associate of Applied Science degree in heating, air conditioning and refrigeration in 2010, graduating magna cum laude.

For the next few years, Coss continued working at Sears and rose through the ranks to be a technician and trainer, overseeing 280 technicians.

In 2013, he realized his dream of opening his own business, At Your Service Appliance and AC.

He also serves as a part-time professor at TJC, teaching heating and air conditioning classes back where he began, on the TJC West Campus.

In 2016, he began serving as a sponsor for the TJC scholarship golf tournament, as a way of paying forward to help the next generation of students reach their potential and make their dreams a reality.

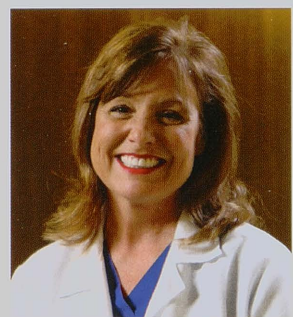
"TJC was one of the best things that happened to me," he said. "It was a true blessing, and now I want to pass that on and help someone else."



## Glenda Lancaster, TJC Class of 2015

A few years ago, Glenda Lancaster was newly divorced, in her 40s, had only a high school diploma and had never worked outside the home.

She didn't just want a new life, she needed a fresh start with a promising outlook for the future.



Lancaster was drawn to the TJC surgical technology program because, she said, "It's a very specific, detailed job that also requires having a heart for helping people.

You are responsible for making sure the surgical field – the operating table, the instruments, the materials, everything – is sterile and safe for the patient at all times."

She graduated from TJC in May 2015. One month later, she went to work in labor and delivery at East Texas Medical Center.

During surgical procedures, she said, her job is to keep her eyes on everything, every movement, to make sure nothing is out of place or is touched in a way that will make it unsafe for the patient.

She credits her TJC professors Sherry Seaton and Brenda Korich for their tough, yet supportive, guidance and for encouraging her to keep going, even when it didn't seem possible.

"My experience at TJC changed everything," she said. "Listen, I started at zero. Now, I have a great job and I don't have to worry as much about money. And with that security and confidence, my shoulders are a little straighter and I walk with a lot more bounce than I did before. That means everything."

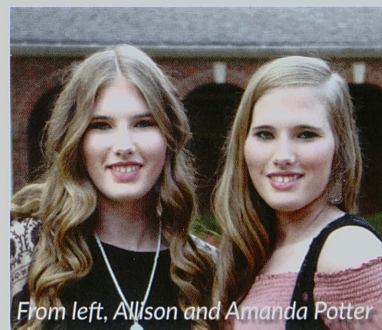
## Allison and Amanda Potter, TJC Class of 2017

Twin sisters Allison and Amanda Potter graduated from Rusk High School in 2015 and were part of the second class of Rusk TJC Citizens Promise Scholars.

Established in 2014, the Rusk Promise covers two years at TJC for qualifying Rusk graduates. The Rusk TJC Citizens Promise program is a partnership between TJC, the TJC Foundation, Rusk ISD, Citizens 1st Bank and The James I. Perkins Family Foundation.

"I can honestly say that if it weren't for the Rusk Promise, we would not have gone to college right after high school," Amanda said. "We would have had to get jobs or go into debt with student loans."

On May 12, the Potter sisters crossed the stage and received associate's degrees in general studies, both graduating magna cum laude.



From left, Allison and Amanda Potter

Amanda said, "We loved our experience at TJC. The professors were all so helpful and supportive, and always

went out of their way to help. You could really tell they were pulling for us the whole way."

Next fall, they both intend to continue their studies at TJC, training for careers in the medical field. Allison is seeking admission into the TJC radiologic technology program and Amanda has applied to the diagnostic medical sonography program.

"We hope to get jobs and become part of the medical community here," Allison said. "We love it here. This is home for us."

## TJC provost receives statewide recognition

By Rebecca Sanders

Dr. Juan E. Mejia, Tyler Junior College provost and vice president for academic and student affairs, has been recognized as the recipient of the Texas Association of Community Colleges' (TACC) Nelson Administrative Leadership Award. TACC includes all 50 public community college districts in Texas and is the backbone organization for advocacy, policy, legislation and collaboration among the colleges, the legislature, state agencies and the public.

The award was established in 2003 in memory of Carl M. Nelson, who served as president of Texarkana College and helped many others assume leadership positions across the state of Texas.

"Dr. Mejia has been an essential contributor to the community college mission since 1988," said TJC President Dr. Mike Metke. "He promotes leadership that includes empowerment, legacy and accountability through ethical behavior."

Mejia began his higher education journey at Texas State Technical Institute and was instrumental in the transition of the institution to what is now Texas State Technical College. He served as a founding member of South Texas Community College and was also instrumental in the transition to what is now South Texas College.

Dr. Shirley A. Reed, president of South Texas College, said, "Dr. Mejia is a treasure who symbolizes the immense contributions community colleges make toward transforming lives."

Mejia earned his Bachelor of Science in education at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi and Master of Education in adult education, and his Doctorate of Education in educational leadership from Texas A&M University – Kingsville.

"I am very humbled and grateful by the recognition, and I consider this honor a celebration for the entire college community," Mejia said.





# GOOD SPORTS

By Tracy Torma



## *Apache Athletics brings home three national championships in one year*

TJC celebrated a spectacular year in athletics, racking up three national championships – in baseball, men's soccer and women's tennis – bringing the number of national titles to a whopping 56.





## NATIONAL CHAMPIONS BASEBALL

Head baseball coach **Doug Wren** said his team was right where it needed to be in the fall of 2016 to defend their national title for an unprecedented fourth time in a row, "but then we got hit with the injury bug."

"After losing 11 players to injuries, it took us a little longer to figure out who we were, but luckily we found that later in the year," Wren said. "As a coaching staff, it was great to watch the guys underneath step up and take on bigger roles, allowing us to play at a higher level."

During the championship game in Greeneville, Tennessee, last spring, the Apaches took an early three-run lead against Niagara County Community College from New York. The final score—5-1 – gave the Apaches a perfect 16-0 record at the national tournament.

"Years from now, we can stop and reflect on this run," he said. "We've been truly blessed to play in one championship, much less four."

As for aspirations of going five-in-a-row next season, he's thoughtful, "Winning is never given; it's earned. We'll take it one day at a time, trust in the process and get in position to win ballgames later in the year."



## NATIONAL CHAMPIONS MEN'S SOCCER

During high school, **Steve Clements** played soccer for something to do in between football and baseball seasons. But when his Mississippi State college advisor needed someone to run her son's youth soccer team practice, it was the start of what would lead to a 23-year coaching career and national championships for TJC.

The top-ranked Apache soccer team went undefeated – the third undefeated soccer season in school history – shutting out the No. 2-seed Monroe College from New York, with a score of 3-0 during the championship game in Tyler.

"Our sophomores had been through a painful year before, losing the finals in double overtime with less than a minute left, so we were determined from that point forward not to let that happen again," Clements said.

Clements says the conditions at TJC are right for athletic success. "We have great facilities, a beautiful campus and quality academics. The administration, school and community are supportive. Our players move on with great success and are able to produce at the next level, both on and off the field."



## NATIONAL CHAMPIONS WOMEN'S TENNIS

Ranked No. 1 all year, the TJC women's tennis team went into the 2017 NJCAA Division I Women's Tennis Championship in Tucson, Arizona, with confidence. "It's nice to be ranked that high, but over time, you have to prove yourself," said **Dash Connell**, a two-time NJCAA All-American while attending TJC from 2001-03.

After doing well the first few days of play, the team lost a couple of matches in the semifinals, tightening the team's overall score. The final day of the tournament ended with the Apaches scoring 46 points to win its 18th national championship in program history. The Apaches just nudged out rival ASA Miami, which tallied 44 points in the tournament.

Since taking over as head coach, Connell's women's teams have won two other national championships (2012 and 2013) and his men's team has won one national championship (2013). He was named the 2014 Wilson/ITA NJCAA National Women's Coach of the Year and the 2014 USPTA National College Coach of the Year.

What's his key to success? "TJC attracts really special people who make special things happen. And our team has a great work ethic."







Sarah Johnson, Marilyn Glass Abegg and Barbara Bass

# Celebrating a Promising Future

*TJC's 90th Anniversary gala raises \$445,000 for new scholarship program*

By Tracy Torma

In honor of its 90th anniversary, Tyler Junior College hosted the most ambitious fundraising event in its history – raising more than \$445,000 for the new TJC Promise.

The TJC Promise is a bold, new initiative that will provide an earned scholarship to eligible high school students within the College's tax district, including Chapel Hill, Grand Saline, Lindale, Tyler, Van and Winona.

Beginning in 2020, qualifying graduates can receive up to two years of tuition and fees at TJC.

More than 250 College supporters attended the gala, held May 5 at Willow Brook Country Club, including TJC board of trustees members, civic leaders and superintendents of six East Texas school districts.

The TJC Apache Belles and TJC Jazz Band entertained guests during the event. The Apache Band and Apache Belles celebrate their 70th anniversary this year.

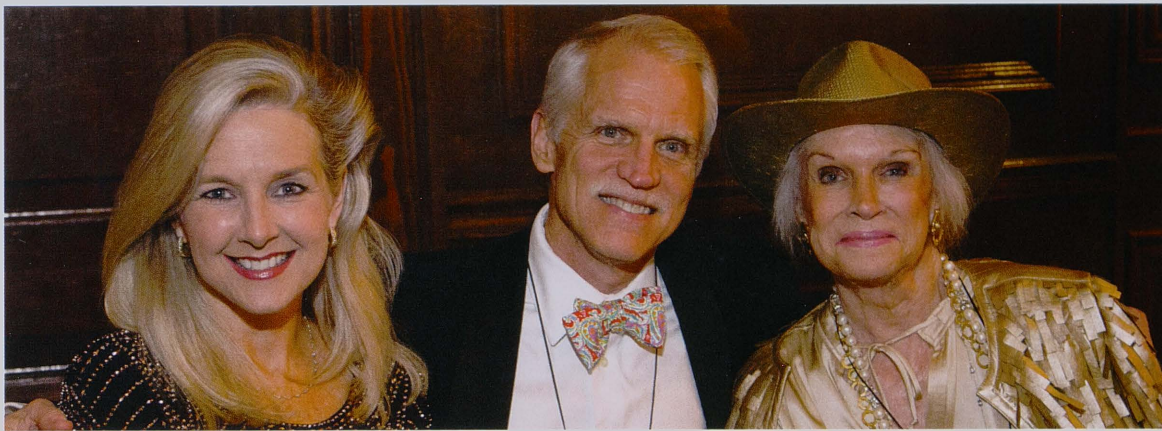
Before dinner, guests were invited to a 1926-themed reception celebrating the founding year of TJC. Guests were then seated in various dining rooms within the club and entertained during the dinner hour by TJC performing groups, including a classical saxophone quartet, a classical guitar ensemble, and a soprano with pianist. Following dinner, guests went to the main ballroom for desserts, coffee, a program, fireworks and dancing.

"The outpouring of support for the 90th celebration and the new TJC Promise was amazing," said Donna Metke, wife of TJC President Dr. Mike Metke, who



Harold Beaird





Tisa Hibbs, Billy Hibbs Jr., and Jeannie Hibbs



Donna Metke

served as chair of the celebration. "Tyler is such a giving community. The fact that we far surpassed our \$250,000 fundraising goal shows we care about each other and the promise for our youth to have access to further their education."

In 2014, the Rusk TJC Citizens Promise was created in partnership with Citizens 1st Bank, the James I. Perkins Family Foundation and TJC, offering TJC scholarships to qualifying Rusk High School seniors.

In fall 2016, 1,226 high school freshmen in the TJC tax district signed the pledge for the TJC Promise. They will be the inaugural class of TJC Promise Scholars in 2020.

Students earn the TJC Promise scholarship by meeting certain standards during their high school

years based on academic achievement, persistence and community service. The scholarship standards promote positive behaviors to ensure that students are on the path to success in high school, college and beyond.

"I believe this is the most important educational initiative undertaken in East Texas," notes Dr. Metke. "It is a true game changer."

Backed with an extraordinary \$5 million commitment from an anonymous lead donor, the College's goal is to raise \$20 million in private gifts to underwrite a dedicated endowment to support the TJC Promise.

The gala event was generously underwritten by Southside Bank, enabling all monies raised to go directly to the Promise scholarship program.

"This is a chance for many students to have an opportunity for higher education," says Southside Bank President Lee Gibson, "and the benefits to the community just multiply as a result.

"It encourages future generations to gravitate toward higher education after high school. An educated workforce brings new businesses to town. It's a boost to our tax base. The TJC Promise is a win-win-win for the communities involved."

For information on giving opportunities for the TJC Promise, please visit [tjc.edu/promise](http://tjc.edu/promise).

## WHY I GIVE



"I'm a huge believer in developing youth. There's an old saying: 'If you want to know what your future will look like, take a look at what you're doing today.' To Diane, my wife of almost 48 years, and me, the most valuable resource that we have in our community is our children and the future we're creating for them. The TJC Promise provides students starting in ninth grade with the opportunity to see what their future could look like and develop positive habits to prepare for that early on. By committing to keeping a reasonable grade point and to be involved in their community as good citizens, these students can pick up two years of college completely paid for. It opens doors that might not have been there before for many students."

**Jim Lestor**

Lead Donor, TJC Promise

**TJC**  
*Promise*



## Nursing scholarship honors Davida M. Edwards

By Tracy Torma



In the 1950s, Davida M. Edwards was asked by legendary TJC President Dr. Harry Jenkins to recruit the first class of nursing students for the Texas Eastern School of Nursing – the forerunner to TJC's Associate Degree Nursing program.

Today, her family has established the Davida M. Edwards Nursing Scholarship Endowment in her honor. The endowed scholarship is open to Smith County high school graduates who have been accepted into TJC's Associate Degree Nursing program.

A native Texan, Davida was a supervisor over 14 counties in East Texas for the Texas Education Agency. Because of her work with area high schools, she was a natural choice to help TJC attract the first class of graduating seniors to attend TJC as nursing students. That first class in 1951 would lead to a top-ranked program that today provides an important source of nurses for East Texas hospitals.

"She was a warm and giving person," recalls her son, D.M. Edwards, a lifelong Tyler resident and local businessman who graduated from TJC in 1974. "She woke up every morning intent on doing what she could do to help others."

A graduate of Texas Woman's University and the University of Houston, Davida was active in civic and church work prior to her death in 1999. She taught at Roosevelt High School in Houston before working for the TEA as an area supervisor.

In addition to the scholarship endowment, an office in the Rogers Nursing & Health Sciences Center is named in her honor.

For more information on giving opportunities, contact the TJC Foundation at 903-510-2249 or [foundation@tjc.edu](mailto:foundation@tjc.edu).

More photos from the 90th Anniversary Gala



LaVerne Gollob, Jennifer Moore Gaston, Teresa Butcher and Marilyn Richey



Cheryl Palmer and Judy Kniffen Clardy



Tyler ISD Supt. Dr. Marty Crawford and Alanna Crawford



Jim Perkins, Margaret Perkins, Dr. Sasha Vukelja and Dr. Larry Anderson



# 2017 TJC HOMECOMING EVENTS

## MONDAY, OCT. 23

- Noon - Drumbeat Kick-Off Ceremony

## TUESDAY, OCT. 24

- 5:30-7:30 p.m. - Community Fall Festival

## THURSDAY, OCT. 26

- 5:15 p.m. - Parade
- 6 p.m. - Pep Rally & Neighborhood Party

## FRIDAY, OCT. 27

- 7 p.m. - Annual Alumni Awards Dinner

## SATURDAY, OCT. 28

- Noon-3 p.m. - Alumni Tailgate Party
- 2 p.m. - Apache Band & Belle "traditional rim walk" followed by Homecoming show & court presentation
- 3 p.m. - Football game: Apaches vs. Kilgore Rangers with post-game performance by the TJC Band
- 7:30 p.m. - Theatre Production: The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

## ALUMNI REUNIONS

### FRIDAY, OCT. 27

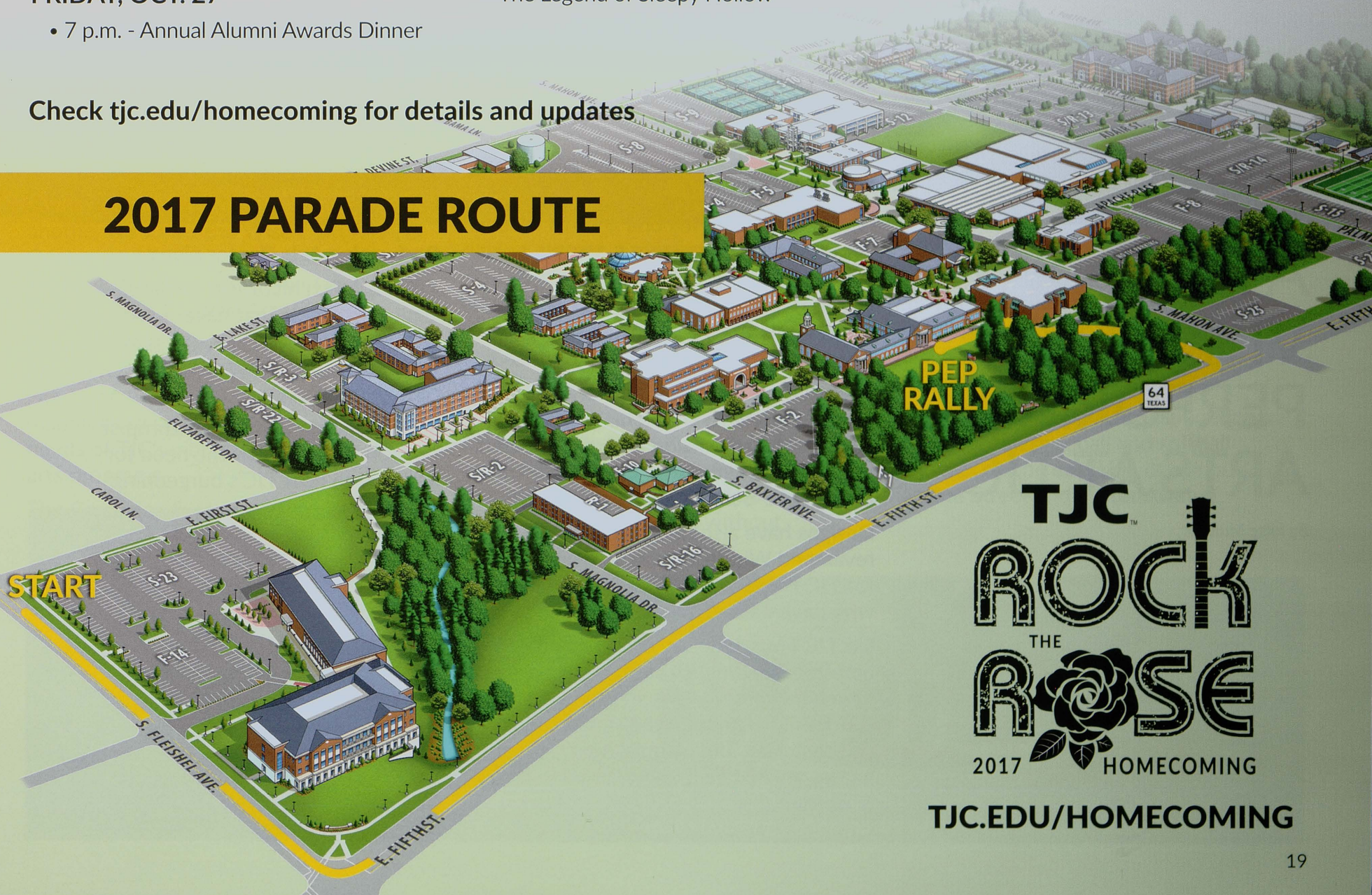
- 6 p.m. - Apache Band & Belles 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception

### SATURDAY, OCT. 28

- 10 a.m. - Brothers & Sisters Brunch
- 10 a.m. - Cheerleaders Brunch
- 9 p.m. - Las Mascaras Dessert & Coffee Reception

Check [tjc.edu/homecoming](http://tjc.edu/homecoming) for details and updates

## 2017 PARADE ROUTE



[TJC.EDU/HOMECOMING](http://TJC.EDU/HOMECOMING)





*Artist's renderings of proposed Wise Auditorium renovation*

# A NEW VISION FOR PERFORMING ARTS AT TJC

By Elise Mullinix

With the Rogers Nursing & Health Sciences Center firmly establishing its western frontier in recent years, Tyler Junior College is now looking to conquer its territory to the east.

Several projects are in the works on the eastern boundary of the main campus, including an expansion and renovation of Wise Auditorium and a joint facility for the Apache Belles and Apache Band.

Designs have also been proposed for a revamped Windsor Plaza, a memorial site for TJC employees and board members who have passed away.

On TJC Founders Day each Sept. 17, employees, administrators and board members gather at the site to remember TJC family members who passed away in the past year, and plaques bearing their names are installed on the memorial wall of honor.

## Performing Arts Center plans

TJC has a rich history in the arts, with legacy programs that have served generations of students and played a key role in TJC's comprehensive, collegiate experience.

In 1955, community philanthropist Watson W. Wise saw the need for a facility to host TJC's burgeoning

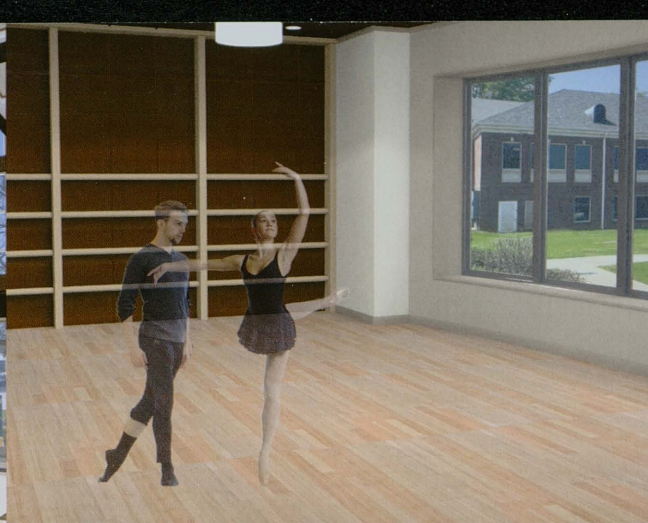


*Wise Auditorium circa 1956*





**Box Office/Lobby**



**Green Room**



**Recital Hall/Art Gallery**

performing arts programs. Along with a \$300,000 tax-supported bond, Wise helped fund construction of a 725-seat municipal auditorium and accompanying classrooms.

Wise Auditorium opened in 1956 and, for more than six decades, it has been home to TJC's performing arts programs and hosted a variety of community performances and events.

In the 1970s, Wise gave again to provide another resource, the Wise Cultural Arts Center; and he commissioned the "Geese in Flight" fountain, which has become the icon for TJC's Cultural Arts District.

For more than 60 years, Wise Auditorium has served TJC and the community. However, the current facility lacks the resources to support the ever-growing needs of TJC's vibrant performing arts programs.

The Campaign for the Performing Arts is a \$12.5 million effort that will transform

Wise Auditorium into a comprehensive performing arts center and ensure that TJC can continue to recruit exceptional talent, grow the College's programs and offer quality programming for the East Texas community.

The project will encompass more than 17,000 square feet of new construction, including a new stage with an increase of 2,058 square feet in performance space; state-of-the-art technology including updated lighting and a fly/theatrical rigging system; a renovated auditorium with new seating plus improved acoustics and sound system; and new dressing rooms, greenroom and climate-controlled storage for musical instruments, costumes and props.

"It's become outdated," TJC President Dr. Mike Metke said. "It's a facility with marvelous potential, but during a show, the performers can't go from one side of the stage to the other without going outside."

Requiring students to leave the auditorium during shows while in full costume creates both logistic and safety concerns, he said.

Metke expects the renovation to begin in summer 2019, with an estimated 12 to 15 months for completion.

### **Apache Band and Apache Belles complex**

Metke hopes a big milestone – the 70th anniversary year of the TJC Apache Band and Apache Belles – will help with fundraising efforts for a new facility to house the performing groups.

Early conceptual renderings show two buildings that would house practice facilities and classrooms, joined by a courtyard.

The facility is expected to be built near the proposed baseball and softball complex on the east side of campus, near Devine Street and Porter Avenue.



*Artist's rendering of proposed Apache Band and Apache Belles complex*



# TJC CULTURAL ARTS

Located in the heart of our main campus, the TJC Cultural Arts District features a variety of art and science programs across four venues, including:

- Wise Auditorium
- Jean Browne Theatre
- The Center for Earth & Space Science Education
- Tyler Museum of Art

If you've ever been to a concert or show on our campus, you already know that the depth of artistic talent among our faculty and students is astounding.

From top-notch theatrical productions and performances by our outstanding music and dance departments to incredible works created by our art students, we have some of the finest entertainment anywhere in East Texas.

And our Center for Earth & Space Science Education never ceases to amaze and inspire a new generation of young explorers.

TJC is the College of East Texas, and we're proud to be a part of our community's vibrant arts and entertainment scene.



WISE AUDITORIUM

JEAN BROWNE THEATRE

CENTER FOR EARTH  
& SPACE SCIENCE  
EDUCATION





## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

TJC music, theater and dance departments join for the 2017 spring musical, "Mary Poppins," in Wise Auditorium.



TYLER MUSEUM OF ART



“ Having taken courses at Tyler Junior College myself and through working with the Literacy Council of Tyler, which is located on the TJC West Campus, I have always been impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the administration and the faculty.

The benefits of supporting TJC are many. Donors can be confident that their gifts are directed as requested, and accountability is a responsibility that is taken seriously by the staff. Everyone in Smith County and the surrounding area benefits from TJC's ongoing efforts to educate more students and improve the quality of the East Texas workforce.

For many students, TJC is the perfect starting point because of the exceptional faculty and the nurturing, safe environment. TJC has had an outstanding reputation for decades because of its ability to prepare students in many areas of study.

The TJC Fine Arts Department has always been highly regarded because of the quality and success many past students have enjoyed. The instructors in all of the disciplines – art, dance, music and theater – have continued the tradition of excellence, with students going on to perform and work in New York, California and successful performance companies throughout the nation. Those students continue to shine a light on TJC because of their success.

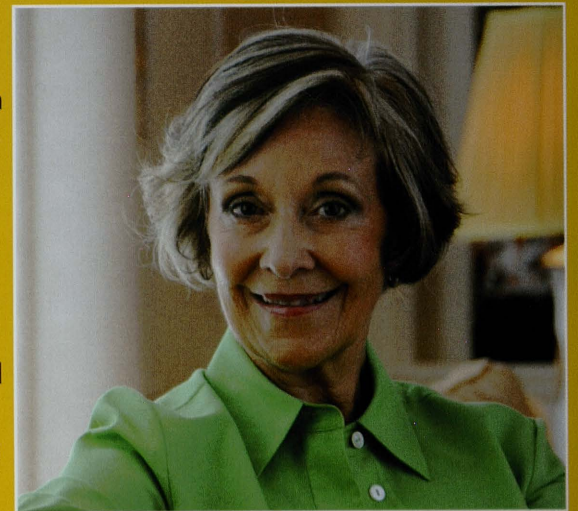
Hours spent working with students often stretch into the evening and late into the night before the last students leave the last class at the end of the long day for the instructors. Having taken many advanced adult dance classes in the evening, I am constantly impressed with the diligence and dedication of the faculty and their attention to every student. During the long hours of preparation for a performance, the dedication is particularly apparent, resulting in extremely professional performances.

TJC is also a major player in improving the literacy rate, which is strikingly low in East Texas. Their efforts, through the Literacy Council of Tyler and numerous scholarship initiatives such as the recently launched TJC Promise, have been enormously successful and deserve support throughout the district because these programs work and improve communities.

I support TJC because they are changing lives for the better and all citizens benefit from their vision of excellence. ”

### Margaret Perkins

*Longtime, ardent supporter of TJC fine arts and the Literacy Council of Tyler*







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## TJC CULTURAL ARTS DISTRICT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### OCTOBER

#### Oct. 21

Rock and Roll at the Dome  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

#### Oct. 26

Homecoming Parade  
5:15 p.m.

Homecoming Pep Rally  
6 p.m. | Jenkins Lawn

#### Oct. 27

Alumni Awards Dinner  
7 p.m.

#### Oct. 28

Alumni Tailgate Party  
Noon-3 p.m.

Apaches vs. Kilgore Rangers  
3 p.m.

#### Oct. 25-28

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Oct. 30

Wind Ensemble Kids Concert  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Oct. 31

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow  
Jean Browne Theatre | 9 p.m.

### NOVEMBER

#### Nov. 2

Fall Choral Concert  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 3

Student Recital Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

Studio 103: Play Reading Series  
Fine Arts Building, Room 103  
3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

#### Nov. 4

Studio 103: Play Reading Series  
Fine Arts Building, Room 103  
3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

#### Star Party Saturday

TJC Science Center | 8, 8:30 and 9 p.m.

#### The Venue

Jean Browne Theatre | 9 p.m.

#### Nov. 7

Tuesday Evening Performance Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 10

Student Recital Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

#### Nov. 15

Circle Mirror Transformation  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 16

Circle Mirror Transformation  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

Wind and Percussion Concert  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 17

Circle Mirror Transformation  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 18

Rock and Roll at the Dome  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

Circle Mirror Transformation  
Jean Browne Theatre | 2 and 7:30 p.m.

ETSO Jazz Spectacular  
Liberty Hall | 7:30 p.m.

#### Nov. 29

Christmas Downtown  
Marvin UMC | Noon

### DECEMBER

#### Dec. 1

Student Recital Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

#### The Nutcracker

Wise Auditorium | 7 p.m.

#### Dec. 2

#### The Nutcracker

Wise Auditorium | 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

#### Dec. 3

#### The Nutcracker

Wise Auditorium | 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

#### Dec. 5

Tuesday Evening Performance Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Dec. 16

Rock and Roll at the Dome  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

### JANUARY

#### Jan. 20

Rock and Roll at the Dome  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

#### Jan. 26

Great Performances Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

### FEBRUARY

#### Feb. 2

Studio 103: Play Reading Series  
Fine Arts Building, Room 103  
3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

#### Feb. 3

Studio 103: Play Reading Series  
Fine Arts Building, Room 103  
3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

#### Star Party Saturday

TJC Science Center | 8, 8:30 and 9 p.m.

#### The Venue

Jean Browne Theatre | 9 p.m.

#### Feb. 6

Tuesday Evening Performance Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 9

Great Performances Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

Love Under the Stars  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

#### Feb. 10

Love Under the Stars  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

#### Feb. 17

Rock and Roll at the Dome  
TJC Science Center | 7 p.m.

#### Feb. 21

In the Heights  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 22

In the Heights  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 23

Great Performances Series  
Jean Browne Theatre | 1 p.m.

#### In the Heights

Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 24

#### In the Heights

Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 27

Wind Ensemble Concert  
Wise Auditorium | 7:30 p.m.

#### Feb. 28

TJC Jazz Festival  
Wise Auditorium | All day

TMA (Tyler Museum of Art)

TJC Science Center (Center for Earth  
& Space Science Education at TJC)

